

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-15 are presently being examined of which Claim 14 has been amended to be in independent form. Claims 1-8 and 11 have been allowed and in the Office Action it was indicated that Claim 14 would be allowed, if rewritten in independent form.

Independent Claim 9, from which Claims 10, 12, 13 and 15 depend, is to a junction block having an inner cover, a power block and connector blocks combined with the inner cover. Components, such as circuit boards, are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks. The power block and the connector blocks form the outside of the junction block. Such an arrangement is not taught or suggested in the prior art.

In the Office Action, Claims 9, 10, 12, 13 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Iwata (U.S. Patent No. 6,430,054). Reconsideration and removal of this rejection are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

The Office Action alleges that in regard to Claim 9, Iwata discloses a junction block (1) having an inner cover (4), a power block (13) and connector blocks (11, 12) combined with the inner cover, wherein components such as circuit boards (5) are disposed and connected within a space surrounded by the power block and the connector blocks, and the power block and the connector blocks form the outside of the junction block.

The Office Action further alleges that Iwata discloses the combination of the power block and the connector blocks with the inner cover is carried out by engaging a slide-engaging part (on the connector housing) with a guide part (9) in a direction crossing the inner cover at right angles;

the side-engaging part (9) of the connector block or the power block enters into a dead space (23); the dead space is within the inner cover (4); and engaging parts (19, 23) for engaging the power block (13) and the connector blocks (11, 12) with the inner cover (4) is carried out in the vicinity of the mount (9) of the inner cover (4).

In a "Response to Arguments" portion of the Office Action the Examiner comments on our argument that the power block (13) and connector blocks (11, 12) do not form the outside of the junction block of Iwata, as outside walls of box-shaped case wall (2) form the outside of the junction block (1), as shown in FIG. 1.

The comment is that FIG. 2 clearly shows that the power block (13) and connector blocks (11, 12) form the outside of the junction block (1).

It is respectfully submitted that it is unclear to Applicants how FIG. 2 of Iwata can be the basis for alleging that power block (13) and connector blocks (11, 12) form the outside of the junction block (1). FIG. 2 is a longitudinal sectional view of the junction block of FIG. 1, and FIG. 2 does not show an outside peripheral edge of the junction block. It appears as though FIG. 1 is the best drawing for viewing the components and structure alleged to correspond to the presently claimed junction block. In FIG. 1 it can be seen that the "outside of the junction block" is formed substantially by "case wall" (2).

Additionally, the Office Action alleges that component (4) of Iwata corresponds to the claimed inner cover and that an alleged power block (13) and connector blocks (11, 12) are combined with the alleged inner cover (4), as claimed. However, referring to FIG. 1, power block

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/565,784  
Response to OA dated July 31, 2007

(13) and connector blocks (11, 12) are combined with box-shaped case wall (2), not the alleged inner cover (4).

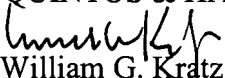
In view of the above remarks, removal of the rejection of Claims 9, 10, 12, 13 and 15 is respectfully requested.

In view of the aforementioned remarks, it is believed that Claims 9, 10, 12, 13 and 15, in addition to Claims 1-8, 11 and 14, as amended, are patentable and in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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